

Where does stormwater pollution come from?

Stormwater pollution has many sources. When it rains, rainwater carries pollutants such as motor oil, anti-freeze, trash, grease, and dirt from streets and parking lots to the nearest storm drain. Runoff water from lawns and landscaped areas can carry pesticides and fertilizers into the storm drains. Even activities such as washing our cars can result in detergents, dirt and grease making their way into the storm drains.

One of the most serious stormwater pollution problems is the illegal disposal or "dumping" of wastes into the storm drain system. State laws and local ordinances prohibit dumping of motor oil, pet waste, paints and other pollutants into the storm drain system.



Did you know that the sewer system and the storm drain system are not the same?

These two systems are completely different. The water that goes down the sinks in your home or business is treated by a wastewater treatment plant or septic tanks system. Water that enters a storm drain flows directly without treatment to our local rivers and lakes.

Is stormwater pollution a problem only when it rains?

No. Throughout the dry part of the year, pollutants accumulate on streets and parking lots. So, when rain finally does fall, the rain water carries pollutants into the storm drains. Surprisingly, water runoff from the daily use of garden hoses and sprinklers can also carry pollutants into the storm drain system.



StormWater should be CleanWater only...

Help Keep Our Water Clean!

To receive your free
guide on 20 ways you
can help protect our
water...

For information on the
disposal of household
hazardous waste...

To receive a list of
recyclers in your
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Cities and County of Riverside



StormWater
CleanWater

PROTECTION PROGRAM

Stormwater Pollution



What YOU should know

Stormwater Pollution

Rain is typically a welcomed sight in Riverside County. It cleans the air and provides us with a valuable resource - water. Sure, rainwater is usually clean. But, as it flows over our streets and yards, it carries pollutants into the storm drains.

So, what's the problem?

The problem is . . . storm drains ultimately carry these pollutants directly to our rivers, lakes and streams..

Stormwater pollution causes as much as 60% of our water pollution problem. It jeopardizes the quality of our waterways and poses a threat to groundwater resources if pollutants percolate through soil.

Some major pollutants include:

- Dirt and grime from streets;
- Motor oil, antifreeze, paints, and household cleaners that are dumped into the storm drains.
- Contaminants from car and truck exhaust;
- Pesticides and fertilizers from lawns and gardens;
- Soil erosion from yards and hillsides;
- Biological contaminants from animal waste;
- Litter, leaves and lawn clippings;
- Contaminates from illegal dumping.



Be a part of the solution!

Everyone contributes a little to the problem . . . now, it's time for all of us to:

- Never pour anything down a storm drain;
- Use good housekeeping practices with lawn care chemicals, oil, gasoline, pet wastes, paints and solvents;
- Recycle and safely dispose of used oil and household hazardous wastes;
- Purchase non-toxic products;
- Report illegal dumping to local authorities;
- Tell others about stormwater pollution and encourage them to help;
- Call the StormWater/CleanWater Protection Program for a booklet on environmentally safe alternatives for the home and garden.